

CANDIDATES IN WAITING.



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Candidates-in-waiting

Candidates-in-Waiting:

A MANUAL OF
HOME PREPARATION FOR FOREIGN
MISSIONARY WORK.



With Preface by the REV. F. E. WIGRAM, M.A.,
Hon. Sec. Church Missionary Society.

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NOTE.

The greater part of this little book has been reprinted, by special request, with considerable additions, from a series of Articles on "Home Preparation for Foreign Missionary Work," which were written for the CHURCH MISSIONARY GLEANER, and appeared in that Magazine in successive months in 1892.

PREFACE.



DURING the past eleven and a-half years it has been my privilege to be brought into personal relations with a very large number of persons, male and female, who were facing the momentous question of personal service in the Mission Field.

To try, in humble dependence on the guidance of God the Holy Spirit, to help such to discern the Will of the Lord ; to seek that such a crisis of their life might result in a more entire and whole-hearted surrender of the will and consecration of service to Him, whether His call proved to be to Home or to Foreign work,—has indeed been a privilege ; and has in a

measure compensated for the loss of that heart to heart touch which the Parochial Clergyman has with his parishioners in their individual joys and sorrows.

But while it has often been my joy to further the aspirations of such inquirers, the experience gained has given me an insight into the practical difficulties which often beset their paths ; the crude notions which sometimes characterise their ideas of Missionary work ; the inadequate conception of the requirements needed for its fulfilment ; and, alas ! the ignorance of Holy Scripture, and the existence of a strong self-will, which may sometimes accompany an ardent zeal, and a firm persuasion both of personal salvation and of a personal call to this particular service.

Very often have I had to point out that the enthusiasm which impels them to offer needs to be balanced by the common-

sense which takes into consideration such questions as those of home claims, and of personal fitness, spiritual, physical, intellectual.

The following chapters, addressed to Candidates-in-waiting, on Home Preparation for Foreign Missionary Work, are admirably adapted to meet the needs of those to whom they are addressed. Nay, more, they are worthy of the perusal of all who recognise the Lord's claim on themselves for service, and who desire to render that service faithfully and effectually, in the place of His appointment, be it in the limited sphere of domestic life or in the energies of evangelistic work at home or abroad.

There will be found in these pages a simplicity and directness of instruction, begotten of an evident wealth of experience on the part of the writer ; while the whole

subject is dealt with on the high level which the dignity of the work, and the alone strength in which that work can be fulfilled, demand.

A recognised need is ably met : and if these pages are perused with that spirit of prayer, and of humble dependence on God the Holy Spirit, with which they have evidently been penned, many a profitable lesson will be learned : and if the counsel given be acted on, the Foreign Mission Field will be the richer both in the number and in the equipment of those who are sent forth, and the Church at home will be furnished with more whole-hearted and intelligent workers.

FREDC. E. WIGRAM,

Hon. Sec. C.M.S.

June 24, 1892.

CANDIDATES-IN-WAITING:

A MANUAL OF

HOME PREPARATION FOR FOREIGN
MISSIONARY WORK.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE object of our little Handbook is exactly set forth in the title which it bears, but it may be well at the very outset to remove one or two misunderstandings which may possibly arise.

First, let me say that the book is not intended to take the place of a course of definite and specific training, or in the least to propose a substitute for any portion of the present testing through which mis-

sionary candidates have to pass. The pathway which leads from the quiet English home into the battle-field abroad is often a long one, and we in these pages are only concerned with its prior part—that preparation region which lies between the call of God to missionary service and the definite offer to a Missionary Society.

Secondly, we must clearly keep in mind that no *standard* is set up in this book on the various subjects discussed. If young men and women read our pages to find out whether they are “fit” to offer for foreign service, the result will be sad indeed. Those who are over twenty-two years of age, and find themselves free to offer, had better do so at once, after prayerful consideration, and consultation with those who can gauge their character and capacity. Earnest prayer and long experience will help those who then weigh the case to decide whether it is well to go forward, and if so, all the preparation outlined in our pages can be begun under the direction of those to whom the definite training of accepted candidates is entrusted.

So if you read with the thought that

our counsel, if acted on, will save you from those "interviews" which seem so formidable, or those "questions" which seem so severe, you will be disappointed; and, on the other hand, if you read to see whether you are fit to offer at all and are up to the "required standard," you will be discouraged and cast down. Nothing can do away with the need for close personal acquaintance with a candidate on the part of those who are responsible to God for sending him out; but the alarming "interviews" are simply a series of earnest talks with those whose whole desire is to send every possible man or woman as a missionary into the great needy world, and the "questions" are simply a necessary test—not of profound theological knowledge—but of a really clear experimental grasp of the fundamentals of our faith, and sufficient accessory knowledge, or capacity for acquiring it, to justify the acceptance of a candidate for training.

But if it is possible to be accepted for training without having gone through the discipline described in this book, and if such high attainments are not absolutely essen-

tial, why write at all? Why not let the candidates come forward for training as soon as they can, and then learn just as much as is possible before they go out? The answer is clear. We want missionaries *quickly*, and we want them *good*; both quantity and quality are needed as soon as ever we can get them. The time is short, and the calls are urgent all over the world. It is profoundly saddening to have to bid a man of six-and-twenty wait a year because he is ignorant of his Bible, or to postpone some hospital nurse's offer because she has never realised God's call to individual work. A worker thirty years of age will sometimes lack all evidence of ability to get on harmoniously with others, or show so little clear apprehension of doctrinal truth as to compel either rejection or a lengthened course of training at an age when such training ought to be a thing of the past. Therefore, in order to avoid such woeful loss of time after the way has opened for a definite offer, it is very urgent that whilst still held at home, each one whose heart God has touched should *save time* by preliminary preparation. A young man of

eighteen hopes to be a missionary ; he is busied in his office, or in his workshop, it may be, all day, and knows that for some years to come he cannot offer himself for training ; but if he has an intelligent apprehension of the studies that will help him most, if for three years or four he steadily works on the lines presently to be laid down, he will be a very different man when he does offer from what he would have been had all thought of "preparation" been postponed until his way was clear. A daughter is either too young or is shut off in some other way from a present offer of missionary service ; for years, it may be, she has to wait, but if those waiting years have been spent in quiet and diligent preparation what time will be saved afterwards, and what added power gained for the work of God. And even if the long-shut door should never really open to the foreign field, would not such a man or such a woman find blessed use for the outcome of such preparation in work for God at home ?

Throughout our land to-day there are many hundred of "candidates-in-waiting."

They are to be found in our Universities and colleges, in offices and ware-rooms, aye, and thank God, also in the humblest walks of life. Many a one is "waiting" in a cultured home with social claims around her, or in a schoolroom patiently plodding through the children's lessons day by day, or behind a counter, or in a work-room, or in service, or washing and toiling and enduring in a humble abode. More than that, there are "candidates - in - waiting" amongst older and experienced men, holding positions of honour and of responsibility. Many a pulpit would be emptied, we doubt not, if the preacher could but have his "heart's desire." Many a successful woman worker would count her gain as loss if she could but one day have the holy joy of setting forth to the Mission Field. But though it gladdens our heart and strengthens us, to class such men and women as these last with ourselves, our little book is by no means addressed to them, for they will already have been taught the lessons which its pages set before us to learn.

Many candidates-in-waiting, realising the responsibility of this "waiting-time," are

asking, "How can I use this interval aright? How can I, tied at home or in my daily business, prepare myself for missionary work?" Let us talk together about this quietly and simply in the following chapters, asking the Spirit of God to grant us His guiding light. There are so many varied circumstances, each of them affecting individual possibilities, that it is hopeless to try to meet them all. It may be, however, that in His great goodness God the Spirit will use what is written to guide, rebuke, or comfort some who are in perplexity as to what to do, and enable them effectually to use the waiting-time ordained by Him.

First, let us dwell for a moment upon the fundamental principle of all true missions—"Spiritual men for spiritual work." You must yourself be in living union with Christ, by the Holy Spirit, before you can lead others to know and love Him. "No candidate is accepted who does not give clear evidence of having yielded his heart to God, and of his personal realisation of the work of Christ for him, and of the work of the Holy Spirit in him."

The object of missionary work is the same to-day as it was when the Great Commission was given to the early Christian Church. Missionaries are sent now, as then, so to "preach" Christ that on profession of faith in Him true converts may be baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity, and so to "teach" among all nations that the converts may seek to observe "all things" that Christ has commanded. What man can do that without a living faith in a personal Saviour and a daily experience of the guidance and enlightening of the Holy Ghost?

It is very important to remember that spiritual fitness is just as needful for an educational missionary, or for a medical missionary, or for a missionary who has to do with house-building or accounts, as it is for a missionary who has more directly evangelistic work, such as itineration; or pastoral work, such as the oversight of a number of Native Christian congregations. There is not one standard of spiritual requirement for a hospital nurse or a teacher, and another for a lady who is to visit amongst the women in their homes.

No matter what the technical qualification of a candidate may be, it never can atone for lack of this one great essential. The humblest and least learned candidate who is spiritually equipped is far more to the glory of God than those who, however great their other qualifications, cannot truly be described as "spiritual men."

Mark that it is true spiritual life, not high spiritual attainment, that we write of now ; the confusion of one with the other is not infrequent, and therefore needs a guarding word. A man may be truly "spiritual" and yet be deeply conscious of his need to "grow in grace" ; nay, did he not feel the need, could he be called truly spiritual at all ? Therefore let no humble-hearted child of God draw back—because he is "not good enough"—from saying, in all the fervour of self-abasement, "Here am I, Lord, send me !"

CHAPTER II.

PREPARATION IN BIBLE STUDY.

PROBABLY two out of every three who read this chapter will begin it with the idea of seeing whether they *know* all that it suggests they should *begin to study*. That is scarcely a rational, and certainly not a comfortable thing to do. Our object is not to indicate how much of his Bible a man must know before he can possibly satisfy the Candidates' Committee, nor is it to fix a standard of knowledge below which he may not be a good and faithful missionary in the field. Our aim is rather to take, with all reverence and humility, the great majestic Revelation of God to man, and seek to point out why and how we should study it, and also so to magnify the wonders of its breadth and length and depth and height that candidates-in-waiting may be stirred to a stead-

fast endeavour day by day to penetrate deeper into its counsels, and be filled with a holy ambition to be mighty in the Scriptures, as was Apollos of old.

Of course it would take years and years to cover all the ground which we indicate here, and then when you had covered it you would find there was precious ore beneath the surface, and that every inch called for excavation, if its hidden treasures were to be brought forth. So it is quite hopeless ever to get one's Bible study "finished"; sometimes one feels it almost hopeless to get it even properly *begun*. But it is absolutely essential that every candidate-in-waiting should be an honest and earnest Bible student, thankfully accepting as God's good gift the waiting-time in which such knowledge may be gained, and resolutely working onward day by day as a steady habit of Bible study is being formed. Begin at once, and you will find, if you re-read this chapter at the end of a year, that you have cause for encouragement and thankfulness. Specially would we urge upon girls who have just left school the paramount importance of

regular Bible study between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three. More leisure can be secured then than ever in after-life; the mind is fresh and pliant, and future usefulness may be doubled by buying up the opportunities which can never be brought back.

“But how should a missionary candidate study the Bible? I read mine twice a day, and make ‘underlines’ and ‘railways’; what more should I do?”

Set before you as a life-long purpose to study that Book until you know it through and through; until your mind is steeped in it; until your heart beats in unison with it; until your lips run over with it. In order that this may be so, study your Bible

Prayerfully. The Holy Ghost is the Author of the Book, He is ever ready to be a Commentator upon it. Never take up your Bible without prayer for His teaching as you read. Constantly remember the insufficiency of human reason to discern the meaning of the Word of God, and with the humbling sense of your own inability always link the grateful remembrance of the promised aid of the Divine Teacher, the

Holy Spirit Himself. Without this spirit of prayer the Bible will oftentimes be dry and barren to you, its deeper meaning will not unfold, its voice will not reach your heart. Nor is a merely formal prayer at the commencement of the reading all that we would imply. As well hold the Book up for a moment to the sunlight and then expect to find its letters legible in the dark. The Bible must be studied *in the light*; we must recognise the need for continued illumination by the Spirit of God as long as we are engaged over His Word. One half-hour so spent will be more fruitful than years of Bible searching apart from His grace. You will necessarily come upon many conflicting interpretations of certain passages; in each case lay the matter before God, and if it is still not clear to you, make a note of it, and quietly go on. Scripture will throw light upon Scripture, and by-and-by the interpretation will be found.

Further, the Bible should be studied

Personally. Open the Book, expecting to find in your portion a message to meet your need. It may be God's arrow to convict you, or God's oil and wine to comfort you;

in either case, be *personal*, and take it for yourself. A German divine has said that the *in*-spiration of the Bible is proved by its *out*-spiration—its breathing out of God's message to the inmost soul. The Book is a living oracle, still uttering the voice of God. You believe this, but do you *know* it? It must be your experience now if you would have it so in the Mission Field. Accustom yourself to *feed* on the Bible. Resist the temptation to feed unduly on devotional books, or teachers, or pastors (all good gifts of God), and specially beware of building up theories as to Christian experience on uninspired biographies, or the testimony of others. Study the experimental Christianity of the Bible. Experience based on that of other men will not transplant into a foreign soil, but that experience which is "from above" is as much an exotic in England as in China, and it will flourish anywhere in "an honest and good heart." In the Mission Field you may have only God and your Bible to support you; learn the sufficiency of the Book and its Author at home. Do not stop short at finding out the beautiful verses

and underlining them, but say, with Jeremiah of old, "Thy words were found, and I did *eat them*." Many of the metaphors used in speaking of the Word of God indicate the personal nature of its message; it is "milk" and "meat" to nourish and strengthen; it is "light" and a "lamp" to guide the feet. No amount of technical Bible knowledge can ever take the place of a devotional feeding upon it as the living Word of God.

On the other hand, it is quite possible to read the Bible with great joy and comfort to one's own soul without really studying it with thoughtful interest throughout. The Bible should be read

Intelligently. Take that Volume into your hand and look thoughtfully at it for a moment. It has taken some 1,500 years to write; the history concerning its preservation is of thrilling interest; it contains within it the destiny of the human race; it embodies all that God has recorded about Himself; all that is necessary to salvation; no more, no less. It gives in Divine proportions the truth about God.

Surely such a Book as that should be

not partially but wholly known! Surely the missionary who would take a full Gospel to the heathen must recognise the necessity of seeking to have a whole Bible in his heart and head!

How are you to set about this? Begin from to-day, steadily, patiently, earnestly, with the faithful use of such ability and time as you have, to study your Bible with intelligent purpose to grasp its meaning as a whole. Study both Testaments, realising that each one is half of the great revelation of God. Aim at a clear idea of the relation of these halves to each other. Seek to trace their connections and contrasts. With St. Paul as your teacher compare the Law and the Gospel, the Old Covenant and the New. Work out the leading prophecies and their fulfilment. Note the *growth* of revelation, as, for instance, in the prophecies concerning the Saviour, where we have successively the revelation of *a seed* (Gen. iii. 15), then the *nation* (the seed of Abraham), then the *tribe* (Judah), then the *family* (David), and finally, in the prophecy of Micah, the very *birth-place* (Bethlehem Ephratah).

Further, let each *book* of both Testaments be a reality to you. Find out what you can about the writer. Fix (as far as may be) the date. Many of those who come forward to offer have not even the vaguest idea of any chronological order of books after the Pentateuch. Try to connect each book with its historical surroundings; fit the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, for instance, into their proper connection with the return from the Babylonish Captivity, and read them side by side with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Search out the parables and miracles peculiar to each Gospel, and note the special aspect of Christ which is presented by each Evangelist. Notice the leading line of each epistle, and see if the opposite aspect of truth is emphasised in any other letter. For example, the justification by faith of Romans is balanced by the works following faith in the Epistle of St. James. This method of study will transform your Bible, and make the parts that have before seemed lifeless instinct with life. What new books the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah become when we read them, not only for their

beauty and comfort, but with an intelligent grasp of the majestic *movement* of the whole; the slow sinking of the backsliding people into deeper and deeper captivity, with the glorious golden hope of a coming Saviour shining through the cloud ! What vividness is added to St. Paul's Epistles when once we have mastered their relation to the history of the Acts of the Apostles, and are sufficiently familiar with their characteristics to trace the growth of the Apostles' teaching.

We are not asserting for a moment that any "candidate-in-waiting" should be able thoroughly to do all this, the mere list of the work to be done proclaims it to be a life-work, but each one can at least set out prayerfully and hopefully to do as much towards it as lies within his power.

Further than this, even if we knew each book in its main teaching, and in its relation to other books, a great and important region, and one that should early be entered upon, would still be left out. The missionary student should begin to trace right through the Bible, from chapter to chapter, from book to book, from Old

Testament to New, the great leading doctrines of our Faith.

The inspiration of the Bible ; the fall of man, and the consequent depravity of the whole human race ; the nature of sin ; the power of idolatry ; the need of an atonement ; the principle of substitution ; the glorious fulness of the Redemption, shadowed in the types, brought to light under the Gospel ; justification by faith ; sanctification ; the doctrine of the Trinity ; the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ ; the personality and work of the Holy Spirit ; the second coming of Christ, especially in its practical bearing upon daily life ; the eternal separation from God of those who "obey not the Gospel" ;—these and many others are cardinal truths, and the whole of God's teaching about them should be known.

Also, do not forget the missionary aspect of your Bible ; it will prove the best handbook as to methods of teaching in the Mission Field. Notice that both Old Testament and New set forth not only the *necessity* for the death and resurrection of Christ, but also for the evangelisation of the

world (Luke xxiv. 44—47). You will soon learn to distinguish the principles, which are eternal, from the outward surroundings, which vary according to time and place; you will learn the true meaning of the evangelisation of the world, and acquire a clear knowledge of the whole of God's mind and will for mankind.

But the oft-repeated question comes, "Is all this study, or any portion of it, *necessary*? If I know the way of salvation can I not preach to the heathen? What does it matter to the saving of a soul whether I know the connection between Ezra and Haggai, or am familiar with the missionary journeys of St. Paul? And as to doctrines, so long as I firmly believe them, does it matter whether I can prove them from Scripture or not?" Far be it from us to say that an untaught and unlettered person cannot point a soul to Christ. He can use the weakest and most ignorant of us; but because He is so gracious, is that any reason why we should presume on His grace? Granting that He can use you *a little* without real Bible knowledge, are you content with that? Do you not want

Him to use you as much as possible ? And is it not reasonable that of two missionaries equally earnest, the one who knows the relative proportions of the many-sided truths of the Bible is far more useful than the one who does not ?

Then again, you can do far better with very limited Bible knowledge at home than you can in the Mission Field. Here, when a soul is brought to the Lord, the echoes of former teachings almost invariably come back ; some little knowledge has lain dormant in the mind and springs into life. Abroad nothing will be known but what is freshly taught. Here newly-converted souls have opportunities for learning, and if you are not able to feed them with the Word of God some one else will. A Bible can be had for sixpence ; in every church God's Word is read, and your ignorance does not involve the ignorance of others. In the Mission Field, if you go to a remote district, where but little translation has yet been done, or where very few of the people can read, the only portions of the Bible available for them will be those that come through your lips. Would it not be a

heavy responsibility to give them part only of the whole counsel of God? How could you pass on to them what you have not earnestly sought to grasp and understand yourself? If, on the other hand, you go to a place where the whole Bible is in the hands of clever heathen, who twist and distort it, or into Mission schools, where the children have been carefully taught the historical outline of Old Testament and New, or to labour amongst a Native Church threatened with doctrinal error, which needs to be cut away with this two-edged sword,—would you not feel deeply, intensely thankful that in the "waiting-time" you had learned how to turn its edge against the enemy?

But even if there were no such practical reasons for intelligent Bible study, there is one which alone ought to settle the question for us all. God has seen fit to give us great part of His Word in the form of history, prophecy, biography, poetry. If that had not been the best possible way, He would have chosen another. The Son of God Himself, when on earth, showed intimate acquaintance with Old Testa-

ment history, and expected to find the same amongst His hearers. Have you ever noted from how many of the Books of the Old Testament He quoted, and that even John iii. 16 is linked with a type from the journey in the wilderness? In this, as in all else, He left us an "example."

"I see that intelligent and systematic Bible study is desirable," some one sadly admits, "but it is not possible for me: I am not clever, I could not learn all that." Firmly do we believe that every one whom God is calling to be a missionary, now or hereafter, is capable of intelligent Bible study. Remember the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost, which is available for every student. Remember, too, that we have outlined a study for *years* in this chapter, and you must not be discouraged that you cannot do it in *a month*! Do not attempt too much at first or you will get bewildered. At the end of this book (Appendix I.) you will find a list of works which will help you in your Bible study. It is by no means necessary to have them all, but one or two of them at least will be very useful to have. In a true commentary

you will often find the teachings of God's Holy Spirit through the man who wrote it, and thus you will get fuller light than if you consulted no book of reference.

But always be very careful what books you do read; many which aim to be helpful will tend to undermine the foundations of your faith. Read no commentary or book of reference which you do not *know* to be scriptural and evangelical in doctrine. If you are in doubt, lay the book aside until you can ask some experienced friend. The Spirit of God, as you study, will bring all things to your remembrance; He will enlighten your understanding, and when the waiting-time is over, and the door is open to the Foreign Field, you will thank God for every hour you have spent in learning to wield "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

In Appendix II. you will find some reference to the working of a scheme of Bible study called the "Chronological Scripture Cycle," which we cordially commend to the notice of every candidate, not as a substitute for daily devotional reading, but as an invaluable adjunct to it.

CHAPTER III.

PREPARATION IN CHRISTIAN WORK.

PART I.

CANDIDATES-IN-WAITING must be not only students, but diligent workers in preparation for the Foreign Field. "I will make you fishers of men." This is the Master's own image of what His followers ought to be. You may fish with a rod and line, landing your silvery captives one by one, or you may, in concert with others, cast out and draw to shore a net with a great multitude of fishes. Both methods of Christian work—the individual and the associated—concern our "candidates-in-waiting." Let us talk of the rod-and-line fishing first.

Have you realised the *importance* of work amongst individuals? You can never deal with numbers until you know how to deal

with units; all true understanding of masses is based on the knowledge of the needs and difficulties of individuals. A clergyman will rarely help men from the pulpit, unless he has helped them one by one from his study chair; a Bible-class teacher will rarely solve the problems practical and spiritual of her hearers unless she has been in living touch with them singly in the week. No amount of knowledge or "preparation" will make up for this; you may study books, but they will not do instead of "books in boots," as someone has quaintly termed our fellow-creatures.

If personal dealing is valuable in work at home, it is still more so as training for the Mission Field. Reading, with this thought in mind, the reports and magazines which record the conquests of the Cross, we find that preaching to large audiences is only part of a missionary's work; great portions of his toil, and also of his blessed harvest, are connected with the patient personal work in which one single case is followed up, for years it may be, in humble, prayerful faith. And it is this work,

this face-to-face dealing with difficulties, which gives a missionary power to touch the hearts of many when he stands before his congregation.

We find that the Lord Jesus Himself worked very largely amongst individuals. It was He who first revealed to the world the priceless value of one immortal soul. Crowds thronged to hear Him, yet He found time to seek out one and another who would singly hear His voice. Trace His interviews with individuals, as recorded in the Gospels; you will find in them a perfect example for personal work to-day. By the well (St. John iv.), in the Temple (St. John viii.), at the lake (St. John xxi.), by night (St. John iii.) as well as by day—anywhere, any time—if *one* would listen—He lavished His time and thought on that *one*. There was a Divine compulsion about it: "He *must needs* go through Samaria." That fourth chapter of St. John's Gospel is pregnant with the principles of individual work. We cannot unfold them here, but if you will take the Lord as your "Master of methods," and study His dealings with the woman recorded there, you will learn

secrets which will help you to unlock many a soul.

What an anomaly it is when someone realises the need of the heathen but not of the men and women near at hand ! Some who hope to be missionaries by-and-bye are at present debarred from “ casting the net,” but “ rod-and-line fishing,” which is imperative on all disciples, *is always possible*, whatever home circumstances may be. Perhaps someone is saying, “ I am too busy or too shut in to take up any work.” Where did you learn that “ work ” only meant a Sunday-school class, or district visiting, or going to the East End of London ? Not from your Bible, surely ! All this is one kind of work ; another kind is quite close at hand.

Here is a loved and cherished daughter in a sheltered English home. She is not allowed to have a Sunday-school class, lest the children should bring some infection ; or to visit in the cottages, because they are not clean ; or to sing in the work-house wards, because it might injure her voice ; or even to gather the girls of the neighbourhood for a Bible-class, because

they are beneath her in social rank. But into the sheltered luxury of such a home the call of God has come. The daughter asks if she may go with the message of salvation to those who have never heard, but her plea is refused, the door seems shut. She is willing to "wait," perhaps, but it does seem hard that in the waiting-time *no work* should be possible which would fit her for the field. No work! Why she is surrounded with it! Only it is the one-by-one work which costs more than a class or a district. There are brothers and sisters, perhaps; certainly there are servants, visitors, friends. There are afternoon calls and afternoon teas; there are the thousand and one social claims, all these may be transformed into a little home Mission Field. What better practice than this? What more needful training for one who longs to win souls abroad? Circumstances vary widely, of course, but we unhesitatingly say that everybody can reach somebody—and if you only know of one for whom you might angle, begin on that one; more will soon be sent. The busy clerk in his warehouse, the young

governess in her schoolroom, the saleswoman behind her counter, the servant in her kitchen or nursery, can all be "fishers" where they are. Take a quiet prayerful hour, and face, alone with God, the surroundings and responsibilities of your own life, and seek His grace to begin this individual work in every possible direction from to-day.

If you cannot get into personal contact with people, what about "the ministry of the pen"? Are there no friends to whom you can write of your Saviour, no lonely discouraged ones whom a letter would cheer? This correspondence work is invaluable missionary training. When the sorrows or difficulties of others are put on paper, one has time to think and pray over them, to search one's Bible for the best answer, and in so doing one's own sympathy and knowledge is deepened, and cobweb-doubts are swept away.

"But individual work needs *courage*," you say. Perfectly true. It is easier for a young man to address a Y.M.C.A. meeting than to have a manly word about salvation with his fellow-clerk in the dinner-hour.

It is easier for an undergraduate to take charge of some sea-side services than to witness term after term for his Master to men in his own set at college. It is easier for a girl to teach a Sunday-school class than to tell her favourite school friend of the love that has drawn her heart away from the love of the world, and to follow that friend with prayer and pleading until she too has found the Lord. But oh, if candidates are thinking of what is "easy," what manner of spirit is theirs? Those who do not love the Lord enough to face individual work for Him at home are little likely to face it bravely for Him by-and-bye abroad.

Not less essential—rather more so—is *sympathy*. To help any one, you must get near them. You must put yourself on their level, and as far as possible in their place. You must unite with them on every point that is possible for one who is truly loyal to Christ, and you must banish every shade of condemnation from your mind. The "gift," of which we read in Romans v. 5, will enable you to do this. Social ice is the great barrier to this individual work.

But even an iceberg melts if the sun shines long enough upon it, and if you keep on loving the barriers will disappear. But sympathy must not degenerate into compromise. There is a danger of being tempted to do evil that good may come. A young man may feel tempted to share in some Sunday excursion in order to finish a "straight talk" which he began with his companion the day before; or a girl may wonder whether she ought "just for once" to go to some worldly amusement to show the friend she is longing to influence that "religion" does not make her "narrow" or "dull." When you fish with rod and line be sure you stand clear on the bank yourself, and draw the fish out of its element on to yours. Far, far more is lost by compromise than is ever gained. It is a deadly snare of the enemy, with which every Christian's path is beset. Again and again has it resulted in very grave injury to the eternal interests of the one who thought to help another thereby.

But even when you have got as far as trusting the Lord to give you courage, and feel some kindlings of Divine love in your heart

for the souls around you, it is not easy to know how to set about individual work. It needs great *tact*. The promise in James i. 5 meets that. It is easy, unless we are guided by wisdom from above, to do a right thing in a very wrong way. It is quite possible for zeal to outrun discretion, and many a young worker has overstepped the boundaries of social reserve in an honest desire to help another soul. Here is a serious danger, for the Christian is bound to avoid "every form of evil" (R.V.), and to do all to the glory of God. Integrity of motive is not enough; there should be wisdom in action as well. It is also quite possible to put the right truth in the wrong way. The Gospel message is many-sided, and so is human nature. The same side will not fit every one at first. You will find a wonderful variety in the aspects of the Gospel presented by our Lord in His interviews, and it is instantly clear that these aspects fitted in each case the one to whom He spoke. Further, it is possible to speak in the right way but at the wrong time. Have you noticed that our blessed Lord met St. Peter more than once after the

denial, but it was not until that morning by the lake that He saw it was time for the tender solemn questioning which melted the disciple's soul?

On the other hand, it is possible to get so enamoured of tact as to lose *directness*. We may talk of Christian work, yet never of Christ ; we may discuss Conventions, but not the truths taught at them ; we may witness, with great tact, perhaps, to the fact that we are Christians, and yet fail to *win souls*. That, after all, is the paramount aim of individual work. Anglers are sent to catch, not to play with, fish.

Full well we know that the whole issue lies with God ; the best of us, at home or abroad, can reach no soul "except the Father draw him," but none the less we ought to strive as though all depended on ourselves. In this joyous though solemn work of pointing one and another to that Saviour whom we ourselves have found, we have the highest, the only true training for the Foreign Field. If we have not earnestly striven to reach souls by God's grace at home, how can we do it abroad ? May not this be the secret of many a waiting-

time? May it not be that “He that shutteth” holds some back until His love so burn in their hearts as to send them after every lost one within reach of their voice or pen?

Great *perseverance* is a feature of true individual work. The Shepherd in Luke xv. sought for the lost sheep—only *one*, remember—“*until* He found it.” Blessed pertinacity of grace! Where should we ourselves be but for it to-day? Heart-doors open very slowly, and often young workers are so timid that they run away when the first knock is given, not even waiting for the possibility of response. In the Mission Field patience becomes a great reality. Years of sowing may precede the reaping, and hope deferred makes the heart sick. If God has set you to learn patience at home, accept His Holy Will. Those near and dear to you may shut their ears to your message; your letters may only get evasive replies; your friends may seem to turn from your words (they cannot from your prayers), but keep on, *keep on*, KEEP ON! Years hence it will be harvest time, and you shall “doubtless come again with joy, bringing your sheaves with you.”

Where words cannot reach, a life of holy consistency may speak with power, but of this we shall have more to say in a later chapter. Another feature, and it is one which is as good for the worker as it is necessary for the work, is that personal dealing is *private* work. It makes no show or noise; it brings no reputation to the one who does it. Let *reverence* mark it always. The secrets of other souls are very sacred, to be breathed out only to God in prayer. It is a deeply solemn thing to stand in the inner chamber of even the humblest heart. There is danger in repeating the experiences of others, or making "cases" out of those with whom we have talked. We should rightly shrink from revealing the family secrets of a household where we had been a welcomed guest, how much more from unveiling the recesses of the heart which had opened to us in some hour of need? In these days of Parochial and other Missions one fears not a little from the unintentional irreverence with which young workers, true and earnest, indeed, but lacking in holy fear, sometimes lay bare with ruthless fingers the sanctuary of a soul. Though it is holy

ground, the youngest may be called to stand there in the name and on the business of his Lord, but let him put his shoes from off his feet, and listen for the voice of God. And let him remember that what passes there is not his to repeat.

Finally, it is a *Divine* work. Our own ability and discernment, and knowledge, if unaided, cannot avail. God has provided the Worker—the Holy Spirit, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and the Weapon—"the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Again and again has it been proved that if the worker has leant on human power or influence, the movement soon dies down, if the words have been human words they have quickly been forgotten. Hence the paramount importance, in personal work, of using no merely personal influence over souls, and also of carefully basing all their hope of help and blessing on some clear passage in the Word of God.

The Creed of the Christian worker, as he comes face to face with an inquiring soul, is this: "'I believe in the Holy Ghost,' who has power to do what I can only talk of,

and I believe in the Word of God, which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of the joints and marrow, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart."

The mighty Worker can speak through the weakest mouthpiece, and He can nerve the feeblest hand to wield His piercing sword. God help us, one and all, to be so yielded that we can be used!

CHAPTER IV.

PREPARATION IN CHRISTIAN WORK.

PART II.

ALL important as is this individual work, it lacks a most essential element in a missionary's training. It involves no co-operation with other workers ; it does not introduce the discipline of control. In the home work we are all familiar with the good but self-willed people who must have their own way at any price, and who take it without regard for protest from "the powers that be," but perhaps we scarcely realise how serious this spirit is when let loose in the work abroad. A Mission Station is a place where patient faith is strongly tested. It is a place where loving Christian discipline must be kept up. It is a place where Duty looms so large and so real that it leaves no room to spare for self-will. In the Mission Field

one must not expect perfect fellow-workers, or infallible Committees, or model organisation. Every one is over-pressed, every station is under-manned ; and there must be thorough loyalty and harmony if things are to go on at all. If young missionaries go out wedded to certain methods, bent upon certain plans, fixed in certain views on minor and external matters, and not prepared to surrender everything that does not involve a principle, they are sure to cause pain and friction. If, on the other hand, they go in loving humility, prepared to "soothe and sympathise," prepared to learn and listen before they claim a right to teach or talk, prepared to test old plans before they propose new, prepared to take their place in the line of workers and keep it, they will indeed be a blessing and a strength.

Submission to control does not mean lack of vigour and spiritual power. Read in 1 Chron. xii. the characteristics of the "mighty men" who came to David at Ziklag. Were there ever greater warriors, more ardent partisans ? Can you surpass, can you even rival them, in holy ardour, in fearless zeal, in perfect equipment ? Yet

notice that twice over we read that they could "*keep rank*." Oh that this were true of all the King's men of valour to-day ! Again, in the fullest of all promises regarding the outcome of a Christian life, that in St. John vii. 38, have you noticed that the Spirit is to flow out of the believer in *rivers* of living water ? We rest on the thought of the river's full swift current, increasing mile by mile ; but we forget that a river has a *channel*, a river has *banks*. For the fullest spiritual life there is a God-made channel—there are God-made banks—let us beware that we never term such banks and channels "undue restrictions," or mistake God-sent limitations for hindrances placed by man.

The practical side of this is not easy to learn, but it can be acquired by experience in associated work at home. Grace to tolerate—nay to *love*—uncongenial fellow-workers, to fall in with unwelcome plans, to abide by irksome restrictions, and to execute unpalatable duties is neither needed nor proffered for the Foreign Field alone. It does not wait to fall as a mantle on the outgoing missionary ; it is a garment that

must be worn at home, in the lowly work of daily service, if it is to be available for the pressing needs of the work abroad.

So much by way of proving the value of associated work. Let us now touch on some of its *methods*, selecting three round which we may group what we have to say.

District Visiting stands naturally between our subject in this chapter and that in the last. In one aspect it is individual work, in another it is associated. No home work is more closely analogous to that in the Mission Field. Excepting for difference in climate and colour, greater ignorance and darker sin, the house-to-house work in India, for instance, is strangely like that in England. There is the same need for patient, thoughtful sowing, the same long waiting for results ; there is the same difficulty on the visitor's part in directness, the same shrinking from an avowal of accepted truth on the part of those visited. There are the same varied natures and varied needs, the same hindrances, the same hopes and fears. If God has entrusted you with a district to visit at home, remember it is missionary work. It is a spot to be evan-

gelised for Him, to be prayed over earnestly and continuously, and to be held as a sacred trust for which you will have to give account. And while you seek to do this work in the true missionary spirit, you will learn many invaluable lessons to be practised by-and-bye in a larger sphere.

The necessity of submitting to rules in such practical matters as the distribution of relief; the restraints imposed by the cautions of experience on unguarded sympathy, or over-sanguine conclusions; and the habit engendered by the easy opportunity of seeking counsel from your clergyman,—will most surely prove a valuable preparation for foreign missionary work. You will remember them when tempted to write your report from abroad with *coulcur de rose*; when you are face to face with temporal needs seemingly far more sad than any which confront us here; when you are disposed to think with self-satisfaction of spiritual success; or when the kindly, but for the moment, perhaps, unwelcome comments of some senior superintending worker will check unwisdom, which, originating in the best intentions, might have

led to dire results. Bend yourself, then, lovingly and humbly to the discipline which a district must bring.

Again, *Sunday-school work* provides training of the best kind for future missionaries. It calls into play not only tact and sympathy and the power of working with others, but also the faculty of imparting Bible knowledge, and giving clear expression to doctrinal truth. Nowadays in most Sunday-schools regular courses of published Lessons are prescribed for every class. This has the advantage, if the courses are wisely chosen, of securing a due sequence and proportion in the teaching of the fundamental doctrines of our faith. You will, in preparing such lessons for your class, find yourself obliged to take the position of "pupil" all the week, reserving that of "teacher" for the Sunday-school hour.

Whether the lessons be prescribed ones or not, the true teacher will always keep the main object in view, namely, the salvation through Jesus Christ of the scholars in his class, and their building up in the Faith. He will own entirely that this must be the work of the Holy Ghost, and yet he

will apply himself with diligence to do his part towards that end. He will seek to convey a clear, though outline, knowledge of the great plan of salvation to each boy or girl, tracing its unfoldings in every part of Holy Writ; and he will do so with the avowed expectation that knowledge shall be translated into experience; he will prayerfully watch indications of a sense of sin that he may lovingly point the awakened soul to the finished work of Christ. What training for the Mission Field is this? And alas! how little do Sunday-school teachers "magnify" their "office"; how lightly is the work undertaken, how lightly set aside! It is second to no branch of Christian work in importance, in interest, in difficulties; yet one sometimes hears it spoken of as if it were a trivial duty, a Sunday "matter-of-course."

Giving addresses in cottage meetings, to Bible-classes, or in the open air will also furnish important missionary training. It may be you are inclined to offer an old objection—that of Jeremiah—"I CANNOT speak" (Jer. i. 6). But there is an experience which should go hand in hand with

this. It is that of St. Paul in Phil. iv. 13 : "I CAN do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." These articles are intended for those who are hoping some day to be working among the heathen, and if this hope comes to be realised, they will find it probably an absolute duty from time to time to speak to companies of people both in houses and in the open air. Take, therefore, the "I can" of the great Missionary, and do not shrink from this one of the "all things" which Christ will enable you to do. Your weakness is a direct claim on the strength of God. Far better to be a trembling, faltering speaker, who feels that in his own strength he "cannot," than to be assured and self-reliant with the "I can" of human power. Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, "could not," and yet they "could." Out of the same weakness the same strength avails to-day. Try it, and you will prove it true.

Many and various are the kinds of meetings to be addressed ; we do not say that each worker should attempt them all. Especially do we urge upon our sisters to observe all due regard for quietness and gentleness of demeanour, reminding

them that while the Spirit of prophecy is still poured out on the "handmaidens" of the Lord, the Pauline precepts referring to woman's place in the Church have never been revoked.

Before passing on to the question of the preparation of lessons or addresses, a word about children's meetings may be allowed. It would be interesting to note the number of well-known workers amongst children who are now in the Mission Field. Perhaps there is a danger here, as in Sunday-school teaching, of underrating the solemnity of the work. Little hearts are strangely susceptible, little minds strangely keen, little consciences strangely sensitive to every word and touch. Simple teaching is all that is needed, no doubt; but oh! let it be clear and true and real; let it have substance and power; let it be based on the Bible, not on illustrations mainly; and in personal dealing with the little ones go softly and slowly and deeply to work, laying a Divine foundation for all the future life. Remember that sin is a great reality to children; that oftentimes they are dimly conscious of the convicting power of the

Spirit of God ; and that the fear of death and the hereafter is strongly present with them. Hence, whilst very open to the Gospel of God's grace, they need the tenderest dealing, the most guarded, loving care.

Now as to the preparation of lessons or addresses. Sometimes one hears it said, "I scarcely prepare at all, but just trust to be given the right words at the time." Where is the Scripture warrant for this? "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak" (St. Matt. x. 19) does not apply to the ordinary work of preaching or teaching the Gospel, as the context readily shows. If a servant of the Lord is *unexpectedly* called upon to speak, no doubt he may implicitly trust for the right message to be given, but in ordinary cases careful and prayerful preparation seems most in accordance with the mind and will of God. The choice of a subject should be made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and in simple faith that He will direct. Instruction, illustration, application should have due place, and no verse should be *interpreted* in a sense not confirmed by the

context. Each truth of revelation is abundantly proved by passages bearing directly upon it ; we weaken our cause and grieve the Spirit of Truth when we allow ourselves to use passages to prove truths to which they do not really refer. It has been well said that "some people teach by persuading, and others persuade by teaching." The latter way is infinitely the better. Application and illustration may sway the emotions, but only solid *teaching*, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, ought to be relied on to reach and convert the soul.

Take a typical Bible address—that in Acts ii.—and use it as a model for your own. Note first the condition of the speaker. He was "filled with the Spirit"; he spoke under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Then see how closely he kept to Scripture, referring everything to the standard of God's Word. Notice further, that whilst personal testimony (ver. 32) and direct reference to the personal knowledge of his hearers (ver. 22, 33) have due place, the sermon embodies a great mass of Christian doctrine, in fact every article

of the Apostles' Creed is either expressed or implied in the chapter. Finally, in closing, the Apostle makes a direct descent upon the consciences of his hearers, and leaves them "pricked in their hearts." If we had more of such teaching as this, we should see more of results such as St. Peter saw. That address was followed by "an after-meeting," during which those convicted of sin came, asking, "What shall we do?" Then with fearless individual dealing, the Apostle puts before them—not a shallow Gospel, but the full and glorious truth; he calls them to repentance and faith, and proclaims to them the definite gift of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord teach those who shall one day go to the Mission Field so to teach and so to deal with inquiring souls; then we shall see converts more like those of the Day of Pentecost, as the Lord adds daily to the Church those that are being saved.

A word in closing as to special *dangers* in associated work. It is easy to allow it to displace home duty, and so bring dishonour to the Lord. Earnestly do we warn all "candidates-in-waiting" of this. The Hand that bars your way to many a

meeting and class where you "want to go" is the wise and loving Hand of God. It may be that, for the present, much outside work is not good for you; you may be in danger of teaching beyond your experience, or toiling beyond your strength. Put home, with its prior claims and honoured restrictions, in the first place, and take up, outside it, such work as is sent you by the Lord. Then, again, associated work has a varying amount of publicity, and is therefore liable to be done for "praise of men." This and other secondary motives are very apt to creep in, such as a desire to be with certain other workers, or connected with certain kinds of work. Humble, prayerful watchfulness, and constant self-examination in the light of the Holy Spirit, are the only safeguards. Lastly, there is a great danger of leaning upon other workers, or upon special methods, instead of waiting *only* upon God. If the power of a meeting is thought to depend on the presence of certain people, or upon certain forms of order, or disorder, can we be said truly to "have faith *in God*"? Neither worker nor method is essential where He is all in all.

CHAPTER V.

PREPARATION AS TO CHARACTER AND
HABITS.

IT has been well said that a missionary needs not only a Call but a Character. It is important to ascertain why you, as a missionary candidate, want to go to the Foreign Field, what doctrines you believe, what knowledge you have acquired, what work you have done ; but what you *are*, in addition to all your knowing and doing, is of vital importance too.

The way in which character may be formed and developed in life and work at home, is our subject, then, in this chapter. First, let us take a steady look at *the character we have to start with.*

It is clear that each of us inherits, from ancestors more or less remote, certain characteristics or features which largely influence our future life. It is essential that in any discussion of character formation or develop-

ment, we should give these natural characteristics their proper place.

Being born unlike, nothing will ever make us quite alike. Varied types of character have their place and value, not only in the Church at home, but in the Mission Field ; we need, however, carefully to distinguish between those *differences* of character which are necessary to the well-being of the work, and those natural *blemishes* of character which will sadly mar and hinder it, unless they are removed by the grace of God. Can God's grace do this? Yes! for have we not seen the strong made gentle, the weak made vigorous, the timid made bold—"under the mighty hand of God"? Natural character is the soil which the great Husbandman tills. In some cases He adds what enriches and fertilises; in others, the stiff damp clay needs an admixture of sand; in others again, there is need to have the great rocks and stones blasted out by some vast power; but when all this has been done, each soil, good and useful in its way, is best suited for a certain kind of crop.

If you would know the extent, and at the

same time the limit of God's dealing with natural character, trace it in the Bible for yourselves. Look at Moses, at Joshua, at Elijah; look at Jonah, at Jeremiah; look at David—and at Saul. Study St. Peter as he was, and as God fashioned him; see the man called Boanerges turned to the disciple of love. But perhaps the deepest character study of all is that of the Apostle Paul, clearly pictured for us before his conversion, and followed thence step by step till the well-fought fight is nearly done.

Have any of you felt utter discouragement because your natural character is not as vigorous or as balanced as others? Take heart! what the grace of God did for men of old it can do, *and does*, for men and women of to-day.

Have any of you felt tempted to justify repeated failure because you are “naturally” this or that? Take heed! Such a phrase is often used, not as a humble confession of weakness, but as a mere excuse. If God's grace is “sufficient,” you are responsible if you do not use the grace.

As you seek to trace in your Bible the

extent to which natural character is modified or developed, you will not fail to notice the varied means which God employed to that end. Primarily, of course, the great trainer and developer of character is the Spirit of God. It is ever His work to bring form out of chaos. But here, as elsewhere, He works in general through means, and He deigns to use us as instruments to forward His designs.

From the character which we have to start with, we pass on, therefore, to consider *how character is daily being formed*. It dignifies and glorifies the homely suffering of life when we recognise our *circumstances* as the great means by which character is disciplined day by day. The setting of God's jewels is designed by His love, and fashioned by His hand. He has put each of us—unless we are definitely resisting His Will—into the place and amongst the people where we can be best developed and trained. To our dull minds and restless wills it may seem as if the waiting-time were being wasted because we are hedged in from “work” by home difficulties, or yoked to uncongenial companions, or

hampered by lack of means ; if only the eyes of our understanding were enlightened, and our wills hushed into obedience to the grand and perfect Will of God, we should see that all these outer things are not merely allowed, but actually *ordered* by the One who makes no mistakes. Remember that He "knoweth what is in man" ; that every lack, every unlovely excrescence of character, every possibility of life and service here and hereafter, are open to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do. Well may we say with the patriarch Job, "His hands took pains about me" (Job. x. 8, *marg.*). By-and-bye, in India, or China, or Japan, or Africa, or somewhere else in that "field" which is the world, the chastening through circumstances which seems grievous now will yield peaceable fruits of righteousness to those that have been exercised thereby.

This "means" towards God's end of perfecting His servants' character has nothing to do with us ; it lies outside our choice. We cannot alter a single circumstance at will. It only remains for us humbly, patiently, joyfully (Rom. v. 3—5) to *accept*

every circumstance which is sent us, lest by murmuring or rebellion we hinder the end in view.

But there is another element in the formation of character with which we are practically and constantly concerned. Who can estimate aright the wonderful power of *habit*, the aggregate influence of myriads of tiny words and doings? Too often we allow ourselves to be "slipshod" and careless in the habits of daily life, little knowing what marks are left upon our character thereby. Do you ever say (in your inmost heart, of course) about something which you now "allow" yourself to do, "I shall not do that when I am a missionary"? If so, remember that when you become a missionary you will still be only a man (or a woman, as the case may be); there will be nothing in your office to change you. Be now, and do now, exactly what, by God's help, you mean to be and do in the Mission Field; never allow yourself to live habitually below your convictions on even a minor point. When one day you are placed in a trying climate, with a difficult language to master,

and little spiritual help around you, how you will thank God, not only for the character formed by good habits, but for the strength of the habits themselves.

Let us be thoroughly homely and practical, and have a word to say about *physical habits* first. Old people always know the importance of these; young people seldom do. A young man wishes to study half the night and most of the day, taking little exercise and hasty meals; he does it, and says he has not suffered, but, by-and-bye, the Medical Board report him unfit for foreign work. A girl dislikes the trouble of carrying a waterproof, ignores wet feet, sits needlessly in a draught, over-walks herself, perhaps, and believes it is rather heroic to act as if she were made of iron, instead of flesh and blood. She does it for a year unhurt, then comes a collapse, and the prospect of China or elsewhere recedes from view, perhaps altogether.

Now the quiet formation of prudent habits would, in a large number of cases, obviate the need for the verdict, "unfit for foreign service." It is true that care will not bring health to those who are constitu-

tionally delicate ; but it is equally true that carelessness necessitates the rejection of many who would otherwise have been physically fit.

Form a habit of going “early to bed,” with its proper sequel of “early to rise.” Some are kept up late by duty, but are there no young folk who love to *loiter*, and allow themselves to waste hours that rightfully belong to sleep ? A little resolution, continued and prayerful, will soon help in setting this right. Then *food* habits need some thought. Many neglect proper nourishment, others indulge themselves in dainties ; both extremes are injurious to health, and therefore to future usefulness. People who have “a habit of forgetting” their lunch hour at home are not very likely to take proper precautions abroad, and those who habitually “can’t eat” homely fare will be troublesome to cater for in the Mission Field. Then as to clothing, fresh air, exercise, we might write volumes. Oh, that all our readers would see the real importance of forming right habits as to these simple things !

As to *mental and moral habits* there is

still more to be said. What books are you in the habit of reading? To what kinds of amusements do you go? These are questions of extreme importance for the future missionary. The few theological books read with a special purpose have not left so deep a mark as the multitude of other books which you have *chosen* for lighter reading year after year. Have you steadily accustomed your mind to good reading until it has become your choice, or have you bent it now and again to a weighty book, and then let it rebound to its habitual frivolity? About amusements, have you trained yourself to find recreation in what is simple and healthy and pure? When all restraint is taken off, and habit asserts itself, what do you *choose*? Again, it may be some one says, "I do now what I shall not do as a missionary." What a terribly low standard! Are you then going to regulate your amusements or your books by what is consistent with the missionary "profession," not by what is consistent for a blood-bought servant of God?

It is God's wise and loving plan to give

opportunities for the formation of habits now, that they may strengthen men and women in the great testing and temptation of foreign work by-and-bye. How many opportunities for self-forgetfulness and unselfishness come to us day by day! Is there not need for the constant saying "No" to the temptation to speak of self, to think of self, to pity self, in our daily life? Sometimes we read in a letter from abroad, "So-and-so is beautifully unselfish, and sets us all an example of devotion in the work." Did that unselfishness fall as a cloak upon the missionary? Nay, it was the result, under God's blessing, of *a habit* of putting self last at home. Or a letter comes to say, "If we want anything done quickly and well, we always take it to ——." Now if you could get at the secret of ——'s promptness in the tropics, you would be sure to find he had *a habit* of concentration at home, and did at once, and with all his mind, whatever he had to do. Or at a committee meeting a letter is read, making some important suggestion about certain workers or a certain part of the work. You see directly that it has weight, not only

because the writer is an old, experienced missionary, but because, as some one says presently, he is a man who is in *the habit* of speaking accurately and without exaggeration, a habit which no doubt cost him much patience and prayer in years gone by.

These are but a few points out of many, but they may suffice to show the paramount importance of those constant hourly decisions for what is *right*, by which a habit is formed.

One word more ; never trifle with a *conviction*, but be utterly merciless to a *prejudice*—if it is your own ! These painful prejudices are the cause of half the difficulties in Christian work, and the man who is in the habit of yielding to prejudice is sure to cause sorrow to others and to himself. Prejudices grow above ground in youth ; they are very apparent, but easily removed ; as a man gets older his prejudices are less evident, but they send roots down into the very centre of his being, and are almost impossible to dislodge. Strive earnestly in the waiting-time to get rid of every known prejudice,

and pray earnestly for light to see those which you have not discovered in yourself as yet. It is very important to distinguish between the "open mind," which readily rids itself of prejudice, and is able to weigh fairly the rights and wrongs of a case, and the "unsettled mind," which has no fixed anchorage, and is tossed to and fro with every wind or wave.

Finally, the formation of *spiritual habits* is supremely important for the missionary. Here, at home, there is the force of example, the stimulus of constant warning and appeal, but out in the Mission Field a man has to stand well-nigh alone with God, amid the deadening influences of heathenism. What a strength to him, then, if the habit of regular Bible reading and study is a strong one ; if it is as natural to him, from long custom, to turn to his Bible as to breathe. But that habit must be formed at home. The chain must be forged by little links wrought out in loving patience year by year. There will be times when intense longing for God's Word may be absent, then the force of a life-long habit will be a barrier against the temptation to sloth.

And the habit of prayer—can any words of ours express sufficiently its paramount importance, its need? Not only the prayer which rises in a moment of special need or pressure, not only the cry of despair when danger is at hand, but the steady, unbroken uprising of a stream of confession, petition, intercession, and praise to the throne of a reconciled God. We at home know well the temptations that assail us in prayer; we know how Satan assaults us most when we seek to get on our knees before God; the temptations and the tempter are even stronger in the Mission Field. Let each one seek, by the power of the Lord, to persevere to victory here and now, that by-and-bye we may not fail.

Then the habit of regular attendance at the House of God, a steady continued share in the public services of the sanctuary, is one that should carefully be formed, as well as the constant habit of drawing near in faith to the Table of the Lord, for our own soul's strength and comfort, and in obedience to His own command. Such spiritual habits as these are all important for the growth of holiness in the soul.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATION IN THINGS PRACTICAL.

THE business of a true missionary is to preach the Gospel, and to seek to instruct and to establish in the faith all who will learn the way of truth. But we need to remember that a missionary must eat and sleep and take exercise as well as preach ; he needs food and clothing and a house ; he has to travel, and most probably to encounter a variety of novel and trying circumstances far away from civilised human aid. Then the people amongst whom he labours have bodies as well as souls ; they need practical as well as spiritual help, just as the multitude did when the Christ was on earth ; and, furthermore, they are by no means always ready to listen to the direct preaching of the Word at first, and can best, in the preliminary stages of missionary work, be reached by

an appeal to their senses. Hence preparation in things practical is well worth while.

We do not purpose to go into the question of full medical or hospital training, or into the details of educational work. It is widely recognised that men and women fully trained are sorely needed for Medical Missions in many parts of the world, and there are nearly always vacant posts for educational missionaries of every class, from the University man who can be principal or vice-principal of a Divinity college, down to the elementary school teacher, who can use her power of discipline and knowledge of method for God's glory in some Mission school. What we want to talk about here is rather the varied practical knowledge—fragmentary, perhaps, and quite "unprofessional"—which can be acquired during the waiting-time at home. It is well to realise that home duties—yes, and even accomplishments and certain forms of recreation—are preparation for future work abroad. It is so gloriously possible to do *all* to the glory of God when we realise how fully every power of body and of mind

is called out and used in the Foreign Field.

There is always a danger that these earthly things, on which a certain proportion of our time and energy is sure to be spent, may get into the wrong place. By divorcing them entirely from the main purposes of our life, and isolating them from spiritual aims and objects, all sense of relationship, and therefore of due proportion, is lost. But when we realise that body, soul, and spirit are alike claimed for the service of God, the things of the body and mind are brought into sacred bondage to those which are of the spirit.

A young man at college would certainly be far less liable to be ensnared into undue love of athletics if he looked on them, while kept in entire subordination to higher things, as an invaluable preparation for missionary work. Such recollections would also help to remind him that many a valuable worker has been lost to the Mission Field owing to overstrain in athletic exercise at home.

Instances quickly rise to mind in which first-rate oarsmen and cricketers have made

first-rate missionaries. Bishop Tucker's long training in severe exercise on the Cumberland mountains has stood him in good stead in Africa ; the Rev. Barclay Buxton has found his tricycle and the Rev. W. Andrews of Hakodate his bicycle, of good service in Japan ; and the Rev. R. P. Ashe went inland on his bicycle in East Africa, and believes they will be found valuable means of transit on the narrow forest paths. In the storm on the lake, when Bishop Tucker's party were so nearly drowned, attention to the order of the missionary, who knew it was wrong to make fast a lug sail on a squally day, would have saved the terrible risk. We read of India missionaries finding a knowledge of healthy games a capital beginning of a firm friendship with the Native lads. Then we have heard a West African lady missionary tell of the health she enjoyed because she was able to manage the unruly little Native horses, and so get riding exercise every day ; and, as a rule, ladies going to join the Persia Mission have to face a fortnight's ride over the mountains to Ispahan. Yes, walking, climbing, boating,

cycling, riding, cricketing may be done to the glory of God, and in direct preparation for a missionary career.

Again, if it is well for a missionary to have a touch of the athlete, it is also well that he should be somewhat of an artisan. Here, of course, Mackay of Uganda towers above all other illustrations. Not only is engineering skill like his of use, but knowledge of building, carpentering, brick-making, or such like arts is sure to turn to account. Letter after letter from the Mission Field tells of the use of such knowledge, or the pains and penalties which result from the lack of it. Native workmen need much supervision, and direct saving of Mission funds is effected when the missionary in these practical matters "knows what he is about." Then a practical knowledge of printing has proved useful many times, and through it missionaries have so trained unskilled Native workmen as to enable them to issue the Scriptures in distant lands. Many Missions have a small local printing-press, and some experiences in type-setting, &c., at home, would make a young missionary able to help from the first. Shoe-mak-

ing, too, is a most important accomplishment in many parts of the Mission Field ; in fact, so clearly is this recognised, that a shoe-mending class is held at the Church Missionary College for the students. One hundred years ago a shoemaker turned into a missionary ; to-day we see missionaries taking a turn at shoemaking !

As to domestic knowledge, scarcely too much can be said. Each "candidate-in-waiting" should learn how to cook (and especially how to prepare simple and tempting food for invalids), how to wash and "make-up," how to make and to mend. This, of course, is more strictly a woman's province, yet we have cause to know that many young men missionaries in isolated stations, with no lady within reach, have been sorely perplexed for lack of knowledge of such homely things. Very often a precious life in the Mission Field may, humanly speaking, depend on the possibility of palatable food being prepared from unpromising materials ; happy the man or woman who at such a time is able to give efficient aid. Every missionary, too, is the better for some knowledge of nursing, and of

the best way to act in such emergencies as must arise in a station far from medical or surgical aid. Ambulance and nursing lectures, as well as lectures on hygiene, are possible for most, and though they do not make a "medical missionary," they give useful and thorough instruction as far as they go. The value of a knowledge of nursing was strikingly exemplified after the recent earthquake in Japan, when Miss Tristram, a highly-qualified educational missionary, was able, because of a few weeks' training in nursing, and thorough familiarity with "ambulance practice" before she went out, to render important assistance to scores of sufferers. Not for a moment do we exalt partial knowledge to the same level as complete mastery of a subject, but it is important to remember that in many cases a missionary is compelled to combine the functions of a whole home community in himself, and that a little knowledge all round is many degrees better than ignorance.

In fact, as one turns the matter over in one's mind, it seems as if every occupation that is not wrong in itself has a bearing on

missionary work. We had thought, perhaps, that fancy work was an exception, but no ! A lady missionary was heard not long since stating that the only disadvantage of her new helper was that she "did not understand fancy work," and therefore the senior worker had herself to take the whole school in this subject, which was regarded by the parents of the pupils as one of considerable importance. Perhaps the knowledge of this may dignify the hours which some "candidate-in-waiting" has to spend "in the drawing-room," unable to do any work but what is considered sufficiently tasteful for the public eye. It is well-known what a power fancy work has been, and still is, in obtaining for lady missionaries admission into Zenanas.

The circumstances of those who hope to be missionaries one day vary widely, and in chapters so general as these it is not possible to deal with classes one by one. It is, of course, impossible for everyone to know how to do everything, and you will readily recall many earnest and honoured missionaries who cannot ride, or cook, or mend shoes, or nurse, or do fancy work, or

manage a printing-press. It would be folly, indeed, to *wait* until one had compassed such varied knowledge as we have written of to-day, but those who *are waiting*—those who cannot go just yet—will do well to apply themselves diligently to such portions of it as are individually within their reach.

Turning for a moment to things of a more intellectual aspect, notice the great value of music—vocal and instrumental—in missionary work. All who can should take pains to cultivate this. An ear accustomed carefully to distinguish tones is a great help in learning a difficult language, such as Chinese. To be able to sing pleasantly, and with clear enunciation of the words, means having an open door for the Gospel where preaching would, perhaps, fail to find entrance. A knowledge of the tonic-sol-fa system has proved of great value again and again. Missionaries, both men and women, have carried portable instruments—small organs, concertinas, violins, and others—into the wilds of Africa, up the snowy sides of the Himalayas, far away into North-West America, and everywhere the music has proved a

help in the work. In many Mission churches and schoolrooms there are harmoniums to be played, and curious Native music to be read at sight. We have seen a letter from a lady missionary, rejoicing that in the midst of all her helplessness about the strange language, she was able on her very first Sunday at the station to play the harmonium in church.

Experience in "operating" with a lantern is another valuable item of practical preparation for the Mission Field. In many places pictures are being increasingly used to make Bible incidents real to the people, and our young missionaries are called upon to be the exhibitors. Photography is also well worth a thought, and any facility for making rapid pencil sketches should be developed.

It is a safe statement that every missionary is sure, somehow or other, to be called upon sooner or later to keep accounts. This, which is a very simple matter if you know how to do it, is terribly perplexing to one who has never attempted it before. And most lady missionaries are likely to have a turn at keeping school registers

before they have been very long in the field. Here are two simple and practical matters, easily mastered to a sufficient extent by any one at home, without much expenditure of trouble or of time, and a knowledge of them may mean much to yourself and to your fellow-workers in days to come.

Again, any knowledge of natural science is of value in the field. To be able to explain visible phenomenon may give aid in dispelling superstitions amongst the natives, and familiarity with the positions of the leading constellations may help a missionary to guide his steps aright. Botany and geology, too, are of use, but here a careful guard must be raised against the seductiveness of "collections," which might possibly prove as unduly absorbing to a missionary as they have to other men.

Intending candidates may also, with great advantage, spend time in a careful study of the whole Mission Field. There are numerous magazines to be read; there are missionary questions to be answered. Books may be borrowed, and such can always be had, for "where there

is a will there is a way." The geography and history of Missions are well worth attention. The policy of Missions is far more interesting than that of any earthly kingdom. Have you realised how you will be tempted by-and-bye in the field to look on your own special station or Mission as the central one, more important than any other? Its comparative needs will be enormously magnified to you through personal contact with them; reinforcements will oftentimes seem very inadequate in proportion to those sent elsewhere; and the interest of the missionary papers, which reach you a month or two after date, will depend largely on whether the Mission that you love so well has received due mention in them. A knowledge of and love for other work and other workers is the best antidote to this. It will help you to remember that your corner of time and space is only a fragment of an age-long, world-wide movement for the evangelisation of the world. See how Mackay in Central Africa followed every advance in India, China, or at home, with as keen and intelligent an interest as if it had directly

concerned himself ; the broad questions of missionary policy throughout the world were present with him in his solitude by the Lake.

This study of contemporary missionary history, and of missionary biography as well, will also help to rid you while at home of the unhealthy glamour which distorts your view of your future work. You will find that spiritual results are beyond all human comprehension in their origin, and can be commanded by no methods ; not even the personal consecration of the missionary, not even firm faith in the power of the Holy Ghost, can ensure an early ingathering of souls. You will find that men who died after long years of apparently fruitless labour have yet done service for which all succeeding workers have given glory to God ; and you will learn that many apparent revivals and ingatherings have proved but fleeting in real results. You will see that missionaries have to take a humble place in the eyes of the heathen as well as of the civilised world ; that they have little romance, little honour, little to flatter self in their lives. But, on the other

hand, you will gather something of the marvellous wonder-working power of the "Wind " which " bloweth whither it listeth," even the Spirit of God. You will catch glimpses of the true missionary's attitude—humble, from a sense of his powerlessness; watchful in every detail of life and conduct, from a sense of his responsibility; rejoicing and expectant even through long delay and disappointment, from a sense that, being where he is in obedience to the call of God, he will in due season reap if he faints not. And you will find, as a cordial to your own soul, the oft-repeated assurance that the consolations of God's grace abound to the servants who leave all for Him, and that missionary service and suffering have a heavenly sweetness even before the cross is exchanged for the crown.

CHAPTER VII.

PREPARATION AS TO C.M.S. PRINCIPLES.

TO furnish a definition of C.M.S. principles would be a task beyond the writer's power. The Society itself has nowhere attempted to define those cherished principles which have ever been its glory and its strength. The position of the C.M.S. as an evangelical Church society results not so much from what it has said as from what it has done ; the accumulated evidence of a line of work carried on without deviation for well-nigh a century is more conclusive than any official utterance could be.

In the preceding chapters many, nay most, of the great principles and doctrines of evangelical Christianity have been touched upon. To these, though they are of paramount importance, we shall not now recur. Our object is rather to make such

suggestions as will enable intending candidates to prepare themselves for missionary service in connection with the Church Missionary Society as loyal and intelligent members of our beloved National Church.

In the C.M.S. Monthly Cycle of Prayer, which it is hoped all candidates-in-waiting regularly use, different missionary societies are brought before us for special prayer, on the thirty-first day of the month. They have all one grand object—the evangelisation of the world—and believe that nothing can effect that end but the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the circulation of His Word, under the gracious influence of the Holy Ghost. Yet there are certain features which clearly distinguish one society from another. In some cases this distinction is territorial. We are asked to pray for the *South American* Missionary Society, for the *China* Inland Mission, for the *North Africa* Mission, &c. Other societies are formed to reach women by means of women, as for instance the two Zenana Societies, and the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East. Others, again, draw their support from cer-

tain denominations at home, and send members of those denominations to represent them in the Mission Field; such are the Wesleyan and Baptist Societies, and many others. Then there are the undenominational societies, which, though they may have territorial limits (as the C.I.M. has), or may work only amongst women (as the I.F.N.S. does), are willing to accept members of the various evangelical Churches for the Foreign Field. Therefore, broadly speaking, we may say that for every country open to the Gospel there is an organisation ready (as far, in some cases, as funds permit), to send out suitable workers, and no truly earnest man or woman is shut out from the Mission Field because of his or her attachment to any recognised section of the Christian Church. But it is true at the same time that candidates may sometimes be excluded, because of such attachments, from certain *societies*, and therefore from certain *parts* of the Mission Field. A man who was by conviction a Baptist could not go as a missionary to Uganda, nor could a man who was definitely a member of the Church of England go as a mission-

ary to the Lower Congo, unless each went in independence of the societies now at work in these respective fields. But both Baptist and Episcopalian would have abundant opening for work in other districts where there is no less pressing need.

We want you to understand very clearly that a missionary society is bound, not only by the convictions of its members, but by its pledges to the public who support it, to be perfectly true and loyal to the line of work which it has taken up. No one would expect the C.I.M., for instance, to send a missionary to North-West America, or question the action of one of the women's missionary societies if they refused to accept a man. On exactly the same principle, the Baptist Missionary Society could not accept a candidate who held that "the baptism of young children is in anywise to be retained in the Church," though they might be heartily glad to see him sent forth by another section of the Church of Christ.

The Church Missionary Society (though bound by Law XXXI. to maintain a "friendly relation" with "other Protestant

societies engaged in the same benevolent design of propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ") is unable to accept as missionaries those who, at the time of offering, are not *bonâ fide* members of the Church of England, and in hearty accord with the Protestant and Evangelical principles which her formularies and articles recognise. The Society's work in the Mission Field was founded, and is still conducted on these lines, and it is essential for the comfort and harmony of the Missions that each member should not only be at one on fundamental doctrines such as those contained in the first eighteen Articles, and those on the Sacraments, but should also intelligently accept the statements set forth in the remaining Articles, especially those on Church constitution and government.

Perhaps you say; "Surely difference of view on these points would not involve difficulties in practical work? It would be easy to be silent about them; missionaries do not go out to preach infant baptism, for instance, but Christ." In one sense, most true; and yet if you think a little you will see what practical difficulties divergence of

view on infant baptism would involve. Let us suppose a case. A lady missionary visits amongst Chinese women ; her labours are blessed with success ; the mother of a family is led to know and believe in the Son of God, and, after due testing and inquiry, is finally baptized. Then comes the question, What about her children—too young as yet for conscious faith in Christ ? The C.M.S. missionary will, of course, wish them to be baptized, and he will naturally look to the lady missionary to help to instruct the mother as to the full meaning of so important a step. But if this missionary has strong misgivings as to the Scriptural grounds of infant baptism, her position becomes a very painful one. She must either stifle her misgivings, or dissent openly from her fellow-workers. You see, then, that such a question as that of infant baptism, which comes up whenever there is work amongst women and children, ought to be quietly and prayerfully faced at home.

Even if a candidate's own mind has never been troubled about such subjects, an intelligent understanding of their Scrip-

tural basis is very important in the Mission Field, where much that has been a lifelong habit to us at home, comes with all the force of novelty to intelligent non-Christian men and women inquiring into the meaning of Christianity ; we need to give them practical illustration that worship, even in its external form, is not a mere matter of heredity, but one of clear conviction.

Does it sound dull and uninteresting to study with care and prayer on these lines ? If so, it is only because you have not yet begun. Make an effort, pierce a little below the surface of things, and you will not need to be urged to continue.

Some knowledge of the history of the Church of Christ will be of real value to you, and will link the Acts of the Apostles in the chain of the ages with the missionary enterprise of to-day. You will find how history repeats itself ; in the triumphs of Christianity over the ancient Gauls and Celts you will find fresh encouragement for the modern warfare of the Cross, whilst the failures and hindrances of the past will be useful object lessons for the present. The whole story of the Reformation will

emphasise the need for purity in life and doctrine, and show the danger of many errors which were then faced in their full development, and are now among us in germ. Further, as you trace the severance of various bodies of Christians from the Church of England, you will be better able to estimate their relative positions one towards another. You will see how the truths which (amid much that we cannot but deplore) were accentuated by such separation, have in turn had a frank and full recognition in the teaching of the National Church. Such study as this will not make us love our brethren who differ from us less, but it will make us love our privileges as evangelical Churchmen more.

Then an intelligent knowledge of the Book of Common Prayer is very important. The history of its formation is blended with the stirring story of Reformation days, and the changes in its wording chronicle the successive tendencies of those unsettled times. Back through the dark Middle Ages into the early days of the Christian Church many portions of it reach, bringing to us the clear and limpid stream of primitive

doctrinal truth. The names of many men well known in history are linked with familiar prayers, yet the greater number of those who use the Prayer Book week after week are entirely ignorant of all this interest which lies behind it.

It must ever be carefully remembered that we accept no statement as true because it appears in the Prayer Book, but only accept the Prayer Book because we believe it embodies truths which have been previously and independently found in the Word of God. Therefore, as we study its teaching, we must bring it to that one and only standard of the Christian's faith.

You will find it helpful to notice the balance of truth which the services of our Church ensure. The great events of the life of our Lord, as well as such leading doctrines as those of the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, the Trinity, and the Second Advent, are brought before us in the Church's year, and illustrated by careful selections of Scripture. Then in the orders for Morning and Evening Prayer we have a broad and comprehensive scheme of worship. The opening "sentences" indi-

cate the only attitude in which man can approach his God; the Exhortation acknowledges the Scriptural basis of confession to God, both in private and public, and calls upon all present to humble themselves before the Throne of Grace. The General Confession, with its unconditional acknowledgment of the sinner's guilt and helplessness, relieved at the close by the all-prevailing plea of the "promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord," leads up to the Absolution, in which the terms of God's pardon to all true penitents are declared, and the need of the Holy Spirit as the power for a holy life is emphasised. Then, after the Lord's Prayer and the Versicles, the true worshippers are invited "to sing unto the Lord," and the praises of the redeemed are heard. Then follow the Psalms, and a lesson from Old Testament and New, interspersed with further songs of praise, until, based on the Word of God which has been read, the Apostles' Creed comes as the personal and audible expression of each worshipper's faith. Finally, having in true penitence sought and received forgiveness for which

praise has been offered up, having been duly instructed in the Word of God and confessed a faith founded thereon, the congregation is invited to join in a service of intercession wonderfully varied in its remembrance of need. It must be remembered, too, that the idea of united Congregational worship, in the sense of any intelligent approach to God, is entirely unknown in heathen lands. Again and again have missionaries testified to the great value of the Book of Common Prayer as a means of enlightening the understanding and guiding the united devotions of those but lately emerged from heathenism, who have no adequate idea of how fitly to approach the Throne of Grace.

It is possible some readers may never have noticed the beauty of the above sequence before. One no less helpful and striking is readily traced in the Communion Service, perhaps the most solemn and beautiful of any service in the Prayer Book.

Space does not permit us to take the Occasional Services one by one. Each of them is full of interest, and embodies weighty truth. Each one will repay you

for study, if such study be hallowed by prayer.

You will also do well to study the Nineteenth and following Articles, in addition to the earlier ones, which deal more exclusively with questions of doctrine. The broad yet guarded definition of "the visible Church of Christ," the clearly-expressed subordination of the authority of that Church and its Councils to the Word of God, and the definition of those who be "lawfully called and sent" to minister "the Sacraments in the congregation" ought to be familiar to us all. Then come the Articles bearing upon the Sacraments, a fruit of the Reformation for which we have cause to thank God. Study them line by line, compare them with the Catechism, the Baptismal, Confirmation, and Communion Services, and the Eleventh Article, and then, not isolating a phrase here or there, which by such isolation favours an extreme of interpretation, compare, with humble prayer for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, their general tenour with the Word of God—the test which the Articles themselves set before us again and again.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MISSIONARY CALL.

WHAT is a "Missionary Call" ? With conscious weakness and humble dependence upon the guidance of the Spirit of Truth let us seek to consider this question for a little to-day.

First, look at the Missionary Call in its universal aspect. The command—the great commission—recorded in each of the four Gospels, and also in the opening chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, was not addressed to the Apostles only, but to the whole body of believers. Nor did it refer only to "the uttermost parts of the earth," it included Jerusalem and Judæa. The command was put into practical effect when the Apostle Peter began to preach in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, and it was further acted on after the persecution following the death of Stephen, when the

whole Church was "scattered abroad," and the members of it "went everywhere preaching the Word."

As in the beginning of the Dispensation of the Spirit, so we find it to-day. The "field" is still "the world," not only the distant portions of it; the "called" to active personal service are still not a few only, but the body of those who know and love the Lord, and are in living union with Him by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in its primary and universal aspect, this call is simply the direct and personal pressing home by the Holy Spirit of the claim of a risen Lord upon His servants for consecration to His service, with no limitation or intimation as to what the nature or place of such service shall be. This is as simple and as fundamental as the great Christian doctrines which we all accept and love: would to God that it were definitely and practically recognised by every member of His Church! If it were, every Christian would recognise that, by the terms of his enlistment, no soldier is "exempt from foreign service," and that to say, "I will not go," or, "I cannot give up home work or

friends to go," is to cherish a spirit of rebellion against Christ's rightful claims. "A good soldier of Jesus Christ" is called to be in readiness to march behind the colours *anywhere*, and to look on such following as part of the allegiance due to the great Captain of the host of the Lord.

Are there not many amongst us who have scarcely realised this, many who regard themselves as "exempt" without the least ground for so doing; many who look on missionary work as an extra thing, not included at all in their own covenant with God; many who could not say from their hearts, "By God's grace, I am willing to serve 'in the place which the Lord shall choose,' whether that place be at home or abroad"?

This is a question which, when first it is faced, touches far down in many a heart. It comes as a deep and searching will-test—a tender, sacred questioning of the soul's allegiance to God. Oh, how can it be, when He has surrendered all for us, that it should raise such a tempest within us when He claims this surrender of our wills? How it shames and humbles us that we

should be so slow, so reluctant to realise the obligation of such consecration of service to our Lord. The question once raised must be answered. The soul that has seen the Lord high and lifted up, and has, therefore, humbled before His Holiness, been bowed in conscious uncleanness to the dust, and has been cleansed by the living coal from off the altar, must hear the voice of God, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” and must surely answer, as did the prophet Isaiah of old, “Behold me ; send me” (Isaiah vi. 8, *marg.*).

It will readily be seen that the Missionary Call, in this its universal aspect, deals mainly with the will, which is yielded to Christ, and with the conscience, which is enlightened as to the extent of responsibility. It implies no fitness for foreign missionary work, and involves no definite direction to “go.” It is as essential for those who stay at home as for those who go abroad, for until a man is willing for service anywhere at the bidding of his Lord, he will be in bondage himself, and will be unable to stir others to set forth for distant lands.

We have said that willingness on a man's part to go—even when such willingness is the result of the influences of the Holy Spirit within him—does not always imply an intention on God's part to send. There is an individual Missionary Call, analogous to the "Go" with which God followed Isaiah's prayer to be sent. A great deal of mystery has centred round this individual Missionary Call. Some have so magnified it as to degrade it into a mere work upon the emotions, others have so minimised it as to make it a compulsory acting on a mere sense of duty to the heathen world.

But after all, the call is very simple to him who, in childlike faith, has prayed, "Send me." In one of the many ways in which His sheep hear His voice, the Divine Shepherd can speak to the listening soul. Sometimes the call will come through a human messenger, sometimes through His Word; sometimes it will be heard only in the inner chamber of the heart, sometimes it will come through outward circumstances and opened doors. Sometimes it will be a ringing call to press through seeming

impossibilities to some special work beyond ; sometimes it will be a quiet guiding to take "the next step" towards the Mission Field, with no clear conviction as to what the following step shall be. But whatever the varying form or force of the call, the essence of it is this : "The sheep hear His voice, and He calleth His own sheep by name and leadeth them out, and when He putteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice."

But if it is all so simple a matter as this, whence come all the bewilderment and tangle which so often surround "a Missionary Call"? Ah! they come not from the Shepherd but from the sheep. We come so seldom with the childlike prayer for *God's sending*, and so often with complex wilful plans about *our going*; we forget so often that the choice must lie to the last in God's hands, and that it is terribly easy to rebound from the one extreme of not being willing to go abroad, into the other no less dishonouring one of not being willing to stay at home.

A difficulty often arises as to the reality

of a Missionary Call. Men and women not infrequently come forward with fervent willingness to go to the Mission Field, and with a deep conviction that God wants them there, and are grievously disappointed at being rejected by some society to which they have applied. It seems to them as if the voice of God said, "Go," and the voice of man said, "We cannot send you." It is well calmly and thoughtfully to face this point. It is quite certain that missionary societies have made many mistakes—for no collection of fallibles can make an infallible: if each member of committee is only an ordinary man or woman, liable to errors of judgment to the very end, how can fifteen or twenty or a hundred such men or women be exempt from errors in such complex work? But it is equally certain that candidates have made many mistakes, too, and, from their inevitable ignorance of many of the underlying problems of the work, they are more open to error than those who have had long experience of the practical working of things. Two things it is well to remember: first, that missionary societies are generally as sincere in seeking to do the

will of God as the candidates, and just as anxious to send a fit worker to the field as he can be to go ; and second, that if God is truly calling a man to foreign service, not all the societies in the world can hold him back. If he is willing to go where God wills, He will put him there in His own good time.

But it behoves each one, because of the danger of impure mixed motives, and the possibility of mistaking God's Will, to make quite sure that the call is real. A call will stand every test and be all the stronger for them. An emotion will fade if it is not put on paper an hour after it is felt ; a true call, heard and answered, will ring on through a lifetime, a deep, sweet undertone to the very end.

Suitability is the first touchstone to apply to the conviction that we are called to the Mission Field. It is a test which any Missionary Society will apply to those who offer, but it is also well for a candidate-in-waiting to apply it to himself. If we are honestly willing to serve God anywhere, we can safely use our common sense, under the guidance of His Spirit. to help us to

judge where we can serve Him best. Though no one is too good or too gifted for the Mission Field, it is manifestly unwise to throw away a useful life. If it is God's will to take a young and noble worker away at the threshold of his missionary service, we know "He doeth all things well," but that is no reason why we should send out to a trying climate a man or woman who in all probability cannot exist in it more than a few months at most, but who might be spared for years of useful service at home. Physical fitness is a matter which a would-be missionary ought, therefore, to consider. We have in a previous chapter discussed the importance of this; if there is any ground for question about it, a doctor familiar with the constitution and family history of the candidate could throw light on it directly.

Then mental fitness should be considered, though the test here is not so easily applied. Character fitness is very important; perhaps our comments in previous chapters are sufficient index as to that. Capacity to endure trial and hardship with cheerfulness is essential, and an excess of nervous

morbidness is an effectual barrier to useful missionary work. As to spiritual fitness, let the candidate humbly and honestly face the matter alone with God. What are the motives from which the desire for missionary labour springs? Have all thoughts of earthly advancement, of self-exaltation, of desire to escape from home friction or monotonous engagements, been brought in confession to God, and grace sought to set them aside? May the Holy Spirit show whether there is an honest desire that the one motive should be the constraining love of Christ, the one aim the glory of God in the salvation of precious souls! Far be it from us to do more in this matter than earnestly to urge each one who believes he is “called” to pray with the Psalmist, “Search me, O God, and know my heart.”

Again, it is wise to use our outward *circumstances* as a further test of the Missionary Call. In the present day, if there be evidence of spiritual fitness, no consideration of humble origin or lack of means, or even lack of advanced education, need bar the way to training for the Mission Field. But there may be clear

home duties, binding family ties in the way. There are "candidates-in-waiting" who may always have to wait. Bring God's call side by side with the circumstances in which He has placed you, and ask Him to interpret both to you by His Spirit. Welcome the whole of His Will, and, as you wait His time, He will either show you that His call had a meaning that you did not see at first—a meaning deep and sacred, to be lived out at home—or He will work out one of those miracles of His Grace by which two impossibilities become one great possible in His mighty hand.

As you weigh and test the reality and meaning of the call which has aroused you, it will no doubt occur to you to consult friends and fellow-workers amongst whom you may be placed. Give little weight to difficulties put forward by those who do not themselves recognise the full claims of the Lord on the personal service of His people, and great weight to hindrances pointed out by all who know His Mind and Will about this. But always remember that the Lord may choose to guide and direct you through an earthly counsellor, and listen with respect

and humility to all that those more experienced than yourself may have to say.

Once again, remember that an individual missionary call does not of necessity mean bodily presence in the foreign Mission Field. It seems as if some were called to China, or Africa, or India, *for God*, and others were called, no less truly, *to God* for China, or Africa, or India, or rather for the world. Their place is *at home*, their work is *for the world*, and they are kept here to kindle the flame of love and longing in other hearts. They are the instruments of God the Holy Ghost in His great work of calling out missionaries; they are the intercessors on the mountain-top, strengthening the warriors in the field. They are truly called, not only as the whole Church is called, but in a special sense, and they have a special and glorious service of their own. These words may come as a light to some one whose heart God has touched, but whose way He has completely closed. Be not cast down; pledge yourself fearlessly to Him for the evangelisation of the world, and He will not only use you *in* the work at home, but *for* the work abroad.

CHAPTER IX.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

IN the last chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians we find that description of the Christian's Armour which is so familiar to us all. We have taught our Sunday-school classes the lesson again and again,—about the girdle, and the breastplate, and the sandals, and the shield, and the helmet, and the sword. It has always been an easy lesson, giving full scope for description, and having the added interest of the Apostle's position as he drew a spiritual lesson from the soldiers round him in his imprisonment at Rome. But as we look a little more closely into the passage, remembering that the illustration sets forth an actual spiritual truth, the question may rise in some minds, "Do I realise experimentally the meaning of these verses? Is there not some deeper, fuller teaching which I ought

to fathom before I go to the Mission Field?" If it be so, may the Spirit who inspired those words shine upon them now, and stir you to pray over them until you learn lessons of vital import for God's Holy War.

First read the passage in the Revised Version. How active it becomes! The altered tense is most significant; it brings before us a soldier who has *armed himself*, who has taken and put on what was prepared for him, and has been watchful that each part was rightly fitted and placed. It is not merely that his loins are girded, he has girt them himself; it is not only that he has on the breastplate, he has consciously and definitely put it on; his feet are not only shod, but we read that he himself has shod them. Here is practical co-operation, active preparation in the face of the foe; do *we* know in our spiritual experience, day by day, a parallel to this, or are we sometimes tempted to think that our standing in Christ does away with the need for daily obedience to the command, "*Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*"?

Then notice the threefold reference to *standing* against the foe—"able to stand,"

"able to withstand, and, having done all, to stand." What an insight this gives us into the aggressiveness of the enemy! And then see further the threefold nature of the attack; first there are the "wiles of the devil," ambushments, mines, secret and subtle assaults, unholy plottings against God and the soul, devices to lure the soldier to destruction; then there is the "wrestling," the hand-to-hand conflict, the encounter at close quarters, the actual contact with the foe; and then come the "fiery darts" cast from a distance—fierce, burning, unexpected. Against all these the soldier has to "stand."

Further, against the armoured soldier we find arrayed, not one solitary foe, but a whole opposing kingdom. We read of the principalities, the powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, the spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places, headed by the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. But then, in this same Epistle, the Apostle gives a passing vision of the other heavenly principalities and powers watching with awe and gladness the Church Militant of Christ, and he gives us a still more glorious reve-

lation of the power to us-ward of God the Father, and the power that worketh in us of God the Holy Ghost. Notice that the spiritual conflict is represented here as partially carried on through human agency. On both sides there is a spiritual possession of men by a spiritual power (apart from, though closely incorporated with, their own being), which impels them to, and empowers them for, things that would be impossible for humanity alone. Therefore the Christian soldier must be garrisoned by a power within, as well as clad in armour without, and he must be prepared not only for purely spiritual assault, but also—perhaps mainly—for assaults from fellow-men in whom, as children of disobedience, the spirit of evil works.

Once again, we notice that though the soldier is represented in the passage before us as mainly on the defensive, there is clear indication that he is also to be aggressive. "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," is needed in the Holy War. It is a great thing to "stand," but there must also be the fighting and the conquering.

But the soldier who would fully realise

the nature and power of the conflict must not limit his study to this one passage, or to this one Epistle, or even to the Bible alone. It is important to know first what is revealed about this kingdom which works against the kingdom of light, and then it is also well to look abroad into the world, and study the various forms of opposition, both in the Mission Field and at home, which the enemy raises against the Gospel and the soldiers of the Cross.

Instead of tracing here the Scripture teaching on this subject, let us rather give a suggestive outline of study, round which we may group the passages for ourselves. We find in the Bible constant recognition of the *existence* of a kingdom of darkness in opposition to the kingdom of light. The chain of verses on this topic will reach from Genesis to Revelation. Then we find numerous *characteristics* of that kingdom either expressed or implied. By studying in this connection the allusions to or descriptions of idolatry, we get a deep and awful insight into its heinousness in the sight of God. The varied forms of the *manifestation* of the power of the enemy

also strike us ; his many-sided assaults on body and on soul are recognised ; and also the special points of human nature on which he most frequently works. Again, the *limits* of the enemy's kingdom are noteworthy. Satan is only the god of this world, the prince of the powers of the air, but God is Ruler of the Universe. As we stand in the garden some starry night, how small seems our earth and its atmosphere compared with those myriad worlds and the firmament between. So is the kingdom of Satan compared with the Kingdom of God. But the limits of Satan's kingdom refer not only to space but to time. The day of the enemy's final overthrow is coming ; Satan shall "shortly" be "bruised" and "chained," and finally "cast into the lake of fire," while that Kingdom of God which cannot be moved will be revealed in glory all through eternity.

And the foe is limited, too, as to power. With startling clearness both in the Old Testament and in the New, is the magnificent thought of the present suppression and final overthrow of the counter-kingdom set forth. It is a thought unknown to

heathen faiths that frail and feeble man, born in sin and corruption, but led by One who unites a sinless human nature to the very nature of God, should be enabled by the power of the Spirit of God within him "to resist" the powers of darkness, to "stand" under their assaults, and to "quench" the fiery darts of the wicked.

But perhaps the most solemn of all Bible passages on this subject are those directly concerned with the *character* of the great enemy himself. With awful clearness does the *personality* of the Evil One stand out in Holy Writ; the combination of his titles and of the figures under which he is represented give a picture of what he is. There is no veiling of his person, no hiding of his power. He goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. As we study, with new and deeper meaning we pray, "Deliver us from the Evil One" (Matt. vi. 13, R.V.). Yet as we realise the personal malignity of Satan, we tremblingly rejoice that the attributes of God are not his. Though mighty, he is not almighty; though wise and subtle, he does not know all things; though possessing powers beyond those of

any human frame, he is not, and cannot be, "in every place." Omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, are the attributes of God alone.

We dare not point to a Bible study of the kingdom of darkness without urging to a parallel study of the kingdom of light. Take the heads suggested above, if you will, and search out under them passages bearing upon the existence, the characteristics, the manifestation, the limits—or rather the unlimitedness—of the kingdom of our God and His Christ. But most of all, if you are tempted to be faint and discouraged by the greatness of the foe, contrast the person of the leader of the hosts of darkness with the wondrous Person of Him whom we love to serve, the Son of God and Son of man, matchless in power and holiness, infinite in love and mercy, Who has conquered death and hell, and bruised the serpent's head, and now goes forth to war at the head of His Militant Church.

We turn now for a moment from the Bible teaching about the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom itself, as manifested in

the strongholds of heathenism or false worship to-day.

One often hears a young candidate or an outgoing missionary talk as if heathenism were merely a mass of dead matter heaped up through the ages, which patient plodding pains would avail to clear away. The heathen are believed to be craving for instruction, crying out for light, and it seems—once the partings are over—that it must be the gladdest, easiest thing to meet their deep-felt need. You never hear an old missionary talk like that. He will tell you that in heathen lands you meet something more than ignorance *plus* superstition, *plus* wickedness, *plus* inherited lines of thought. He has measured the foe, and faced the force against him. He will tell you there is an organised kingdom of evil, bearing down with mighty power upon the men and women who dare to invade its domain. He will tell you that heathenism is *a spiritual power*, holding the people in cruel bondage; the idols—"dumb idols"—he will agree with you are "nothing at all," but behind them he has found entrenched the power of the father of lies.

In some places, he will admit, the heathen are craving for teaching, but that is the exception, not the rule, and the craving often means that the white man is wanted to bring goods for barter or presents for the chiefs; a real spiritual longing to be led into the way of truth is very, very rare. The strong man armed keeps his palace, and his goods are at peace. As to "crying out for light,"—that is gloriously true of individual souls, but speaking of heathendom as a whole, men still "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil"; and as to "a deep-felt need," the old missionary will tell you that the god of this world has so blinded the heathen, that a true sense of need and sinfulness is rare enough to make contact with it set his heart singing for joy. He will tell you, too, of the tremendous personal effect of contact with heathenism, how deadening to the soul, how blighting to the spiritual life, and it may be he will solemnly and earnestly warn you to beware lest you grow cold and loveless under such chilling influence, and lose the spring and vigour needed in the battle of

the Lord. When a young Christian soldier steps in answer to his Captain's call to the front of the battle, he will find himself before the strongholds of a mighty, living foe ; a foe who has reigned, it may be, supreme and unchallenged ; a foe who will assault the invader fiercely, and seek to re-capture every deserter from his post ; a foe whose fiery darts can pierce all things, *except the armour of God*. It is well to know all this beforehand, lest the soldier be taken by surprise.

If the Christian soldier is to wage war amongst the strongholds of heathenism, he should be somewhat instructed about them, that he may assail them at their weakest points. Perhaps in home preparation for foreign missionary work, sufficient stress is scarcely laid on the value of an intelligent knowledge of the religions of the heathen and Mohammedan world. The subject is a vast one ; a single branch of it would employ a life-time, but students who cannot go exhaustively into any part of it, can readily gain an intelligent general knowledge of the false systems behind which the power of Satan is entrenched. This will

We know the Spirit of God as the One who convinced us of sin, and, revealing to us the Saviour imparted new life to our soul. He is to us the Spirit of Witness, whispering "Abba Father" in our heart. He is Teacher, Comforter, Guide. His sanctifying Grace has worked in us any likeness there is to Jesus Christ. He is no Stranger, but "a Gracious, Willing Guest," Who has been with us and in us since first we yielded ourselves to God. But have we even begun to realise the abundance in which He has been shed forth—for us, and for all who will "ask" the Heavenly Father for the fulness of His gracious Gift? The Holy Ghost is infinite; He is God. We are bidden to be filled with Him, so filled that we may not only know Him as a well of water within us, but as rivers of water flowing through us to the thirsty ones beyond. He is offered to work in us a spirit of power and of love and of discipline (2 Tim. i. 7, R.V.). He is to be the inspirer of all true prayer (Eph. vi. 18), the power for witnessing and for warfare. Do we long that our Christian life shall keep bright and glorious in a heathen land? The secret of that lies in

“the supply of the Spirit.” In the *Pilgrim's Progress* Christian is shown, in Interpreter's house, a furnace burning brightly, though a man pours water on the flame. How does it keep alight? The mystery is explained in a moment when he finds that, screened away from sight, someone is pouring into the furnace *a stream of oil*, which makes the flame leap up and live.

Do we long to defeat the enemy, to bear up under his fiercest assaults? It was the Sword of the Spirit—the Word of God—which our Leader used in His great recorded conflict with the foe. That sword, still wielded in the Spirit's power, is our one aggressive weapon to-day. The Lord Himself did not face the temptation in the wilderness until He had been baptized with the Holy Ghost, and after the tempter departed from Him for a season, He returned “in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.” If He needed the Holy Ghost to sustain Him, how much more do we?

APPENDICES.

I.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR STUDY.

- “The Portable Commentary.” (Collins and Sons.)
2 vols., 10s.
- “The Cambridge Bible for Schools.” (Cambridge University Press.) Vols. from 1s. 6d. to 5s. each.
- Blunt’s “Undesigned Coincidences.” (Murray.) 6s.
- Nicholl’s “Help to Reading the Bible.” (S.P.C.K.)
2s. 6d.
- Angus’ “Bible Handbook.” (R.T.S.) 5s.
- Tristram’s “Bible Places.” (S.P.C.K.) 4s.
- Canon Girdlestone’s “How to Study the English Bible.” (R.T.S.) 1s. 6d.
- Maclear’s “Old Test. History.” (Macmillan.) 4s. 6d.
- Smith’s “Scripture History.” (Murray.) 3s. 6d.
- Maclear’s “New Test. History.” (Macmillan.) 5s. 6d.
- Conybeare and Howson’s “Life of St. Paul.” (Longman’s.) 6s.
- Paley’s “Horæ Paulinæ.” (S.P.C.K.) 3s.
- Vaughan’s “Ch. of the First Days.” (Macmillan.) 10s. 6d.
- Dr. Waller’s “Handbook to the Epistles of St. Paul.”
(J. F. Shaw.) 5s.
- Barrett’s “Companion to the Greek Testament.”
(Bell and Sons.) 5s.

II.

"CLEWS TO HOLY WRIT," OR THE CHRONOLOGICAL SCRIPTURE CYCLE. *A Scheme for studying the whole Bible in its historical order during three years.* By MARY L. G. PETRIE, B.A., LOND. (*Hodder and Stoughton, 3s. 6d.*) This book has grown out of a student's effort to help other students, made in connection with the College by Post, of which its author is founder and president. The first papers of the "Chronological Scripture Cycle" were written in 1888, and when the scheme had been taken up by nearly fifty of the correspondence classes in the College by Post, and also by over 1,400 individual Bible Readers (many of whom were missionaries abroad or "Candidates-in-Waiting" at home), a general desire was expressed for their issue to a wider public.

For further particulars as to the College by Post, application should be made (enclosing a stamped envelope) to Miss Petrie, Hanover Lodge, Kensington Park, London, W.

III.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR STUDY.

Bishop Harold Browne on the Thirty-nine Articles.
 Boulton on the Thirty-nine Articles.
 Pearson on the Creed. (Bell and Sons.) 5s.

- Procter on the Book of Common Prayer. (Macmillan.) 10s. 6d.
- Moule's "Outlines of Christian Doctrine." (Hodder and Stoughton.) 2s. 6d.
- Maclear on the Creeds. (Macmillan.)
- Hole on the Book of Common Prayer. (Hodder and Stoughton.) 2s. 6d.
- Barry's Teachers' Prayer Book. (Eyre and Spottiswoode.) 3s. 6d.
- Procter and Maclear on the Book of Common Prayer. (Macmillan.) 2s. 6d.
- Bishop Rowley Hill's "Notes on the Church Catechism." (Nisbet and Co.)
- Maclear on the Ch. Catechism. (Macmillan.) 1s. 6d.
- Bishop Titcomb's "Gladius Ecclesiæ." (Church of England Sunday School Institute.) 2s.
- Bishop Ryle's "Old Paths." (Hunt & Co.) 7s. 6d.
- Bishop Ryle's "Knots Untied." (Hunt & Co.) 7s. 6d.
- Bishop Ryle's "Principles for Churchmen." (Hunt & Co.) 7s. 6d.

[The books named in Appendices I. and III. are such as are generally helpful on all essential points; in some cases we are not prepared to endorse the authors' views on minor matters.]

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